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AUTHOR Zwink, Timothy A.; Hensley, Stephen R.
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ABSTRACT

The North West Oklahoma In-Service Cooperative (NWOIC), established in 1980, encourages, promotes, and channels faculty development and needs in the rural northwestern quadrant of Oklahoma. Its objectives are: (1) to aid northwestern Oklahoma school districts in the structure and administration of local faculty development plans; (2) to develop cooperation and communication among local school districts; and (3) to provide greater utilization of creative and innovative faculty resources to further educational opportunities for the students of public schools in northwestern Oklahoma. All school districts in northwestern Oklahoma are eligible for membership in the NWOIC, which is governed by the member school districts and not by an institution of higher learning. The NWOIC has established six satellite centers for staff development and has assisted its members in writing state mandated staff development plans by means of needs assessment surveys. Since NWOIC's inception, its Board of Directors has provided more than 40 inservice staff development workshops and has functioned as coordinator for a number of other cooperative activities. The NWOIC is continually investigating possibilities to improve future inservice staff development activities and services. NWOIC's constitution is appended. (JMK)

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THE NORTH WEST OKLAHOMA IN-SERVICE COOPERATIVE

A MODEL FOR RURAL COOPERATIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

by

Timothy A. Zwink

and

Stephen R. Hensley

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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BACKGROUND:

The initial concept for the North West Oklahoma In-Service Cooperative originated as a result of a presentation on university centered staff development consortiums in Kentucky by Dr. J. T. Sandefur, Dean of Teacher Education at Western Kentucky. Dr. Stephen R. Hensley, Academic Dean of Northwestern Oklahoma State University, heard Dr. Sandefur's presentation at a meeting of teacher education deans in Colorado Springs during the summer, 1979. Upon returning to Oklahoma, Dr. Hensley made a proposal to Dr. Joe J. Struckle, President of Northwestern Oklahoma State University, that the university take the lead in forming a similar consortium for public school staff development in northwestern Oklahoma. After a period of discussion on what would be best for the schools of northwest Oklahoma, Drs. Struckle and Hensley decided that the best consortium model would be one that entailed a non-university centered philosophy. Also, it was decided that in order to be successful, the cooperative would have to have the support of northwestern Oklahoma school superintendents.

The next step of action was to schedule a meeting in the Fall of 1979 with six superintendents who were recognized by their peers as strong administrators and leaders in their field. At the resulting meeting of administrators, Drs. Hensley and Struckle explained the cooperative concept, asked the representatives if they approved of the idea, and questioned them to see if they would be willing to participate in the proposed organization. The superintendents readily accepted the idea and immediately elected the late Dr. Joe Glover of Burlington, Oklahoma, to act as spokesperson for the organizational group before fellow administrators in following meetings and correspondence.

In the Spring of 1980 a meeting of the superintendents of northwest Oklahoma was hosted by Northwestern Oklahoma State University at Alva, Oklahoma. Dr. Glover presided over the meeting and again presented the cooperative concept to the present administrators and faculty whom they chose to bring. Dr. Hensley acted as support to Dr. Glover, helping answer questions about basic organizational philosophy on such matters as who would control the administration of the cooperative. Drs. Glover and Hensley pointed out that the only involvement of Northwestern Oklahoma State University would be in providing the Executive Secretary for the organization and other administrative and secretarial support. Also, a proposal was presented that .50 cents per Average Daily Attendance would be assessed as seasonable membership dues (the State of Oklahoma provides each school district $2.53 per ADA for staff development purposes).

Dr. Glover, as spokesperson for the group, was directed to develop a constitution for the cooperative that would demonstrate the concept of public school control and university support. With Dr. Glover's cooperation and approval, Dr. Hensley designed a constitution for the cooperative which embodied the basic principles desired by the northwest Oklahoma superintendents.

In the Fall of 1980 this constitution was presented to delegates from forty-four school districts of the northwestern quadrant of Oklahoma for approval. Its acceptance resulted in the creation of the North West Oklahoma In-Service Cooperative which was to provide a mechanism for cooperative faculty development in that rural region of the Sooner State. The purpose of the NWOIC was to encourage, promote, and channel faculty

development needs and ultimately serve the best interest of the students in the public schools of the State of Oklahoma. The adoption of the NWOIC constitution was followed by the delegation's selection of the first NWOIC Board of Directors.

The initial member schools of the NWOIC represented more than 1,300 public school elementary teachers, secondary teachers, and administrators. The geographical area spanned by the NWOIC included fourteen (14) counties with a total approximate area of 11,000 square miles in rural northwestern Oklahoma.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives for the NWOIC were formulated with the understanding that the individual school districts maintained the first responsibility for their faculty development policy and the NWOIC would then serve in a supportive capacity. With these basic considerations in place, the objectives of the NWOIC were as follows:

1. To aid northwestern Oklahoma school districts in the structure and administration of local faculty development plans.
2. To develop cooperation and communication among local school districts.
3. To provide greater utilization of creative and innovative faculty resources to further educational opportunities for the students of public schools in northwestern Oklahoma.

MEMBERSHIP:

All of the school districts in northwestern Oklahoma were deemed eligible for membership in the NWOIC. However, if eligibility of a school

district were challenged for some reason, such as geographical location, resolution of the question would be made by the NWOIC Board of Directors. This policy was the outgrowth of the various preliminary administrators' meeting where discussion often centered on a major concern of the numerical and geographical size of the cooperative. The administrators were aware of the potential problem involving an excessive number of member schools located over a far reaching area potentially diminishing the cooperative's to serve all members effectively. As a result the cooperative first ranged approximately 100 miles east, west, and south of Alva, the administrative headquarters, and had initial membership of 44 school districts. Six schools located more than 150 miles east of Alva indicated interest in joining but were ultimately encouraged to affiliate with other staff development programs nearer to home for their best interest in obtaining service.

GOVERNANCE:

The governance of the NWOIC was considered significant in that, contrary to many other staff-development cooperatives existing in Oklahoma, the NWOIC was designed to be governed by the member school districts and not by an institution of higher learning. This self-governance was established in the following manner.

Each school district was apportioned two voting delegates, one of which had to be a classroom teacher from the local school district's staff development committee. At an annual fall conference of the delegates from the entire NWOIC, seven (7) members were selected from the voting delegate body to serve as the NWOIC Board of Directors. Three board members were comprised of classroom teachers and administrators. Initially elected for staggered terms of one (1) and two (2) years, the NWOIC Board of Directors

was responsible for establishing policies and procedures for the staff development programs of the NWOIC.

The NWOIC Board of Directors elected its own officers each year, with the president of the NWOIC Board of Directors deemed president of the entire NWOIC. The Executive Secretary of the NWOIC was a staff member of Northwestern Oklahoma State University and approved by the NWOIC Board of Directors. The function of the Executive Secretary was to carry out the policies and coordinate the activities designated by the Board of Directors. In addition to approving the Executive Secretary, the Board was to meet bi-monthly (or as needed) to take care of outstanding business and to plan for upcoming activities. The Board was to complete a plan for NWOIC activities for the coming year by April 10, which allowed school districts the opportunity to incorporate NWOIC activities into their local staff development plans for the coming year.

BUDGETING:

The member school districts were to pay dues which were contingent on the previous year's average daily attendance (ADA). The dues for membership were to be 50¢ per ADA, with a limited maximum of $1,000. Funding and dues were to be reviewed annually by the Board and were subject to change by a majority of delegates at the annual fall delegate conference. The deadline for dues was set on or before October 10 on each year, and the Board was to be held responsible for the use of the funds in planning NWOIC activities.

ACTIVITIES:

The delegates to the Fall, 1980, conferences established satellite center staff development activity sites. These six centers were located

with the intention of having them placed evenly throughout the NWOIC so that members from all NWOIC schools would be within one (1) hour's driving distance from activity centers. This establishment of satellite centers not only met the need to have activities within a relatively reasonable driving distance for all members, but it also allowed for NWOIC activities to take place away from Northwestern Oklahoma State University, therefore supporting the non-university centered cooperative.

During the NWOIC's first year of official operation in 1980-81, public school districts in Oklahoma came under a mandate of Oklahoma House Bill 1706 which directed them to have local staff development plans submitted to the Oklahoma State Department of Education by the late Spring of 1981. Therefore, the principal object of the NWOIC Board of Directors was to provide the service of assisting NWOIC member schools in writing their staff development plans.

Following several weeks of planning, the NWOIC Board and Executive Secretary decided that satisfactory plans could be developed if the needs of teachers, parents, and students could be assessed. Next, by using information provided by NWOIC members, a list of staff development goals were developed. The NWOIC Board of Directors then contracted Dr. Doyle Watts, Director of Teacher Education at Northwestern Oklahoma State University, to produce needs assessment surveys for teachers, parents, and students which were directly related to previously established staff development goals.

On request these needs assessment surveys were provided to all NWOIC members on computer forms. When member schools completed and returned the needs assessment forms to NWOSU, the results were returned in an average

of one day. Approximately 30 schools took advantage of this program of setting staff development priorities.

Additionally, the NWOIC provided its member schools with a sample time table for the production of their staff development plans in order to comply with Oklahoma State Department of Education guidelines. And finally, the NWOIC provided member schools with a sample staff development plan and program which could be adapted to each local member school's needs.

Following this process of needs assessment surveying, the individual NWOIC member school districts were expected to inform the NWOIC Executive Secretary of their top three needs for the next year. The NWOIC Board and the Executive Secretary then used this information as a guide in developing the NWOIC staff development program for the following year.

Since the inception of the NWOIC, its Board of Directors has provided more than 40 in-service staff development workshops for member teachers and administrators and has functioned as coordinator for a number of other cooperative activities among the member schools of the NWOIC in rural northwestern Oklahoma. Among these workshops have been several featuring nationally prominent teacher consultants who have addressed such topics as discipline, individualized instruction, motivation, and the gifted and talented student. So far, these workshops have been scheduled on Saturdays in order to have a full day's contact with the presenter. Other satellite center workshops have made use of NWOIC teachers and other regional professionals as resource persons. The satellite center workshops have been scheduled on weekdays after school (at first these were four hour workshops from 5-9 p.m. but now have been modified to three hours, 5:30-8:30 p.m.).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

In order to better serve the NWOIC member schools, the NWOIC Board of Directors is continually investigating possibilities to improve in-service staff development activities and services. Currently, the NWOIC Board is examining the most recent technological advances in the fields of audio-communications and video-communications in order to see if they might offer a potential of improving the selection of staff development programs as well increasing the cost effectiveness of NWOIC activities. Also, the NWOIC Board of Directors presently is making an effort to improve coordination among member schools by proposing a common professional day on which the NWOIC would offer staff development programs throughout the cooperative for membership participation. These programs would be presented during a weekday instead of the present practice of offering workshops after school hours or on weekends. Finally, the NWOIC Board is considering a proposal to establish a mobile audio-visual service center for member schools.

CONCLUSION:

To date, the NWOIC is addressing the problem of providing quality in-service staff development programs to the teachers and administrators in rural northwestern Oklahoma and it appears to be one successful approach to providing staff development services, coordination, and cooperation between relatively widely scattered school districts.

CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTHWEST OKLAHOMA
IN-SERVICE COOPERATIVE

PREAMBLE:

The school districts of Northwest Oklahoma, in order to provide a mechanism for cooperative faculty development, do hereby create the Northwestn Oklahoma In-Service Cooperative (NWOIC) and this constitution. The purpose of NWOIC is to encourage, promote and channel faculty development in the best interests of children in the State of Oklahoma.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the NWOIC are formulated with the understanding that individual school districts are charged with the first responsibility for their faculty development policy and the NWOIC will therefore serve in a supportive capacity. With these considerations, the objectives of the NWOIC are as follows:

1. To aid Northwest Oklahoma school districts in the structure and administration of local faculty development plans.
2. To develop cooperation and communication among local school districts.
3. To provide greater utilization of creative and innovative faculty resources to further education of the children in Northwest Oklahoma.

ARTICLE I

Name

This organization shall be called the Northwest Oklahoma In-Service Cooperative (NWOIC) and shall have the responsibility of supporting faculty development plans in school districts of Northwest Oklahoma.

ARTICLE II

Membership

Section 1. Eligibility: All school districts in Northwest Oklahoma will be eligible for membership in the NWOIC.

Section 2. Determination of Eligibility: Eligibility, if questioned, will be determined by the board of directors of NWOIC.

ARTICLE III

Governance

The governance of the NWOIC shall be as follows:

1. Each school district shall have two voting delegates, one of which must be from the local district staff development committees.
2. There will be an annual meeting of the entire cooperative delegates.
3. Voting delegates will select a board of directors with five members from the voting delegate body.
4. Board of directors will be elected for a two-year term. The initial election will elect two members for a one-year term and three members for a two-year term.
5. The board of directors would be responsible for establishing policy and procedures of the staff development.
6. The board of directors will elect its own officers each year.
7. The president of the board of directors will be president of the NWOIC.
8. Executive secretary will be selected by the board of directors. (NWOSU would offer a member of the staff.)
9. The board of directors will meet bi-monthly or as needed.
10. The board of directors will be responsible for planning the cooperative activities by April 10 of the year preceding the activities.

ARTICLE IV

Funding

Funding for NWOIC will be as follows:

1. School districts funding will be based upon ADA with a $.50 ADA, limit of $1,000. Funding will be reviewed annually by the board of directors and may be changed by a majority of delegates at the annual meeting.
2. Fees will be due on or before October 1 of each year. Board of directors will be responsible for the budgeting of the cooperative.

3. Districts joining the cooperative after October 1 of each year must pay the total fees for the year.

ARTICLE V

Satellite Centers

The following districts will serve as satellite centers:

1. Guymon
2. Laverne
3. Fairview
4. Ponca City
5. Enid
6. Alva
7. Woodward

ARTICLE VI

Amendments

Section 1. Amendments may be proposed by a majority vote of the NWOIC delegates.

Section 2. Amendments to the constitution may be ratified at any meeting of the NWOIC delegates by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting, provided that the delegates have had in their hands a copy of the proposed amendment at least two weeks in advance of the meeting at which the vote is taken.

ARTICLE VII

Ratification of Constitution

Effective Date: This constitution will become effective upon its ratification by a majority of the delegates from local school districts present and voting.

ARTICLE VIII

Bylaws

Section 1. Submitting Bylaws: Bylaws of the NWOIC may be amended by two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting at an official NWOIC meeting, provided that the bylaw or amendment to a bylaw was proposed at a previous NWOIC meeting

and was included on the agenda at which a vote is proposed.

Section 2. Parliamentary Authority: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the NWOIC in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this consitution and bylaws.